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NOT FORGOTTEN

Navy veteran Jay Hupp pays tribute to all who served, following a Veterans Day ceremony in George Washington Park in Centralia, Wash. This year marked the 100th anniversary of the deaths of four Legionnaires killed during the city's first Armistice Day parade. **Read the story on page 40.** Photo by Scott Spiker



The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its nearly 2 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 12,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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'Not the End of History'

I wish to thank Alan Dowd for his history lesson on the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall (November). I remember well where I was when it went up, and when it came down. As a teen, on a Sunday evening, we watched the initial stages on the news. Then, of course, we heard of potential wars: the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile Crisis. A news junkie, I read papers all the time. By 1989, I had served my time on active duty and was out of the reserves. On a business trip to Seattle, a few buddies and I shared a room and went to our evening meal, and then back to the hotel until the meeting began the next day. I turned on the TV at 11 p.m. to watch the news – with the time difference, it was light in Berlin – and I saw masses of West Germans with every kind of ax, sledgehammer and any such implement you can imagine breaching the wall. It was one of those great moments in history.

The downside of the evening, as it was a slow news day in Seattle, was that a young reporter went to a local Jewish leader, who predicted that this was a bad thing, as a unified Germany could only spell doom. One of my buddies wondered where he had been for the past 20 years. Five years later, I was in a new profession and did some contract work at a secure facility in the D.C. area. For lunch our contact took us to the cafeteria, and from there into a grassy courtyard where three sections of the wall were mounted.

Again, thanks, Mr. Dowd. God bless all who perished trying to escape the chains of communism, and the leaders whose steadfast faith made that moment possible.

– Roger Melchior, Ellenton, Fla.

'A Duty to Lead'

An interesting, although somewhat discouraging, interview with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (November). There are 38 ambassadorships and 256 key posts for which the president hasn't even nominated anyone, despite a law requiring him to do so within 300 days. Overall, more than 1,200 federal positions that require Senate confirmation have gone unfilled more than three years into this presidency. This situation is not

having a positive impact in delivering, as Pompeo states, "good diplomatic outcome." Does the administration really believe it can singlehandedly fix the issues our president broke to begin with?

On the Islamic State, Pompeo says, "We know the threat remains and we'll be dogged in protecting America from it." By pulling a small contingent out and abandoning allies, then going back with no professional and knowledgeable or expert



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diplomatic core? Where is our foreign policy? Whims don't work in world decisions and our national security.

– Rick González, Phoenix

For Secretary of State Pompeo to pontificate about our “duty to lead” while his administration abandons our Kurdish allies in Syria to the brutal Erdogan regime – well, ironic hardly says it. Besides betraying friends who by far bore the brunt of the fighting and the casualties against the Islamic State, this action has delivered Syria to Russia, Iran and Turkey, and effectively ended U.S. influence there – and not only there. What message is Taiwan to take from this? South Korea? The Baltic countries? We, and they, face far more formidable foes in those places than Turkey.

– Joe Farrell, Cambridge, Ohio

From 1969 to 2019 to 2069

On The American Legion's 50th anniversary in 1969, then-National Adjutant William F. Hauck wrote, “We are disturbed over some of the things that are happening on our college campuses.” The major difference between those students and today's is much more dramatic; students then opposed a war they felt was immoral, whereas today young people in our colleges and universities are openly attacking the principles on which this nation was founded.

Even more troubling is the abandonment of these principles

by the very people sworn to defend them. Far too many members of Congress have the audacity to call themselves “lawmakers.”

National Adjutant Daniel Wheeler's letter that will be opened in 2069 makes no mention of this growing assault on our way of life, and I find this very unsettling given that Americanism is one of the Legion's Four Pillars.

Victor Davis Hanson's recent commentary “The Death of American Citizenship” expresses my concerns better than I ever could. What he says echoes the late Georgie Ann Geyer, who warned in 1996 that we are becoming “Americans no more.”

– Adjutant Dave Gorak,
Post 242, La Valle, Wis.

Left on the moon

There is a very important omission in the small article about things left on the moon (Rapid Fire, November). My cousin, the Rev. John Maxwell Stout, was NASA's chaplain for the astronauts. “The Apostles of Apollo” is an account of his efforts to serve them. Stout and astronaut Edgar Mitchell were instrumental in the development and placement of a Bible on the moon's surface.

– David Stout, Boiling Springs, S.C.

USS Abner Read

I enjoyed the article about this ship (Rapid Fire, November), but it did not include the destroyer's full designation (DD 526).

– David M. DiPaola, Jacksonville, N.C.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS

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Strengthen GI Bill by closing loophole

Creation and passage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 is one of the proudest moments in American Legion history. That pride compels us to correct any wrongs that might tarnish the GI Bill of Rights.

A recent Government Accountability Report examined how veterans are affected by school closures. It also broke down graduation rates of the top 50 schools receiving Post-9/11 GI Bill tuition and fee payments. While the average graduation rate among public institutions was 73 percent, the rate at for-profit schools was a dismal 22 percent. Even with a generous curve, most objective graders would consider that an "F."

The American Legion has no issue with online learning or alternatives to traditional college classrooms. What we do have a problem with are companies that separate veterans from their benefits by failing to provide quality education and training commensurate with their advertising.

Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., pulled no punches in a 2018 op-ed on this subject for *The Hill*. "Time after time, many for-profit colleges sought out and targeted veterans who then used their hard-earned benefits, not to mention their time and energy, on a worthless program," she wrote. "And that's if they even were able to finish their coursework. When some for-profit schools abruptly shut their doors, veterans were left without a degree, and their GI Bill benefits used up. These corporations cut and run after receiving up to 100 percent of their revenue and profit from federal funding that taxpayers intended to help students, including our veteran and military-connected students, receive higher education and training."

Enabling many of these schools is a well-intentioned federal regulation requiring them to obtain at least 10 percent of their revenue from sources other than Title IV education funds. The GI Bill and other military tuition-assistance programs fall within that 10 percent, making veterans particularly vulnerable to predatory marketing. We all know DoD and VA are funded mostly by federal dollars. Why the government allows schools to treat these revenue streams as private-sector dollars makes no sense.

In October, The American Legion's National Executive Committee unanimously passed Resolution 15, which calls for legislation to support greater GI Bill outcomes by closing the 90-10 loophole.

While veterans who are scammed can sometimes recoup the benefits that were taken from them, the time and inconvenience required to do so can be major hardships for those trying to readjust to civilian life. It also adds significant costs for taxpayers.

The sudden closures of Corinthian Colleges in 2015 and ITT in 2016 affected more than 35,000 students. VA estimates that more than 7,000 were using Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. Sadly, this pattern of failure has continued in 2019 with the closure of Argosy University and select Art Institutes. Many were surprised to learn that some of the credits they had earned were not transferrable to other schools. Moreover, exasperated students often turned to unnecessary student loans to undo the damage.

One of the major goals of the GI Bill was to help veterans transition to post-military careers by opening the doors for higher education and vocational training without incurring personal debt. The American Legion remains committed to this sensible goal. Is Congress?

James W. "Bill" Oxford



National Commander
James W. "Bill" Oxford

MEMORANDA

BASEBALL REGISTRATION

Registration for American Legion Baseball teams begins Jan. 15. Teams must be registered in order to participate in the 2020 season.

baseball.legion.org

FOUR CHAPLAINS DAY

Every year, American Legion posts nationwide commemorate the selfless acts of the Four Chaplains on or near Feb. 3, designated Four Chaplains Day by Congress in 1948. With interfaith services, memorial ceremonies and other events, they lead their communities in honoring the chaplains and 668 other men lost when USAT *Dorchester* sank.

Download a brochure about Four Chaplains Day and suggestions on how to conduct an observance:

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“You’re supposed to check up on your troops. We’re charged ... with the health and welfare of our troops. What we like to do is check up on our members and make sure they’re OK. We also check in on their families as well. It goes back to helping out with the community.”

American Legion Post 18 Commander Chris Page, after a Veterans Day Buddy Check in Weehawken, N.J., where members – mostly of the post-9/11 generation – spent the afternoon making personal visits to veterans in the community



\$5 million

Amount raised for the original American Legion Endowment Fund in 1924-1925, which equates to about \$75 million in 2019 dollars

\$25 million

Fundraising goal for the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation, which pays for American Legion service officer training programs and provides cash grants to military and veteran families with minor children at home during emergency financial hardships

SERVING YOUTH

\$35,403 Amount in American Legion national youth scholarship funds disbursed in October

\$188,000 Amount in scholarships to be awarded to participants in the 2020 American Legion National Oratorical Contest, an increase of \$50,000. The scholarship amounts had not changed in 22 years.



SERVING VETERANS

\$19.5 million Value, in dollars, of more than 766,000 hours volunteered by American Legion members in 2018 through the VA Voluntary Service at more than 200 facilities nationwide, including VA medical centers, community-based outpatient clinics, Vet Centers, nursing homes, Fisher Houses and cemeteries

3,000 Minimum number of accredited American Legion service officers around the world who provide free veterans-benefits counseling and assistance for approximately 750,000 claims at any one time

57

Registrants for American Legion College Nov. 3-8 in Indianapolis, an all-time record

13,648

Respondents to a 2019 American Legion mental health survey, 30 percent of whom reported knowing a veteran who died by suicide



45,373

Minimum number of Boy Scouts sponsored worldwide by American Legion posts in the most recent membership year

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JASON CASTLEBERRY

"If you really want to make a difference and help people, The American Legion can give you that platform like it did for me."



Jason Castleberry hoped that separating from the Army would take the edge off his struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder.

"Transition was difficult," he says. "When you leave the military you feel like these things are going to go away, but that really wasn't the case. It wasn't until I got into The American Legion that it started getting better."

Castleberry led efforts to launch Laramore-Osborne Post 100 in Royse City, Texas, which has rocketed to nearly 100 members in three years. He had joined the organization out of a desire to be around other veterans, but quickly discovered the benefits in giving back to his community. "I didn't have a sense of purpose or mission like I had in the military," he says. "(The Legion) gave me a renewed sense of purpose for helping people."

Post 100 fulfills the Legion's mission in Royse City: Serving veterans. Mentoring youth. Instilling patriotism.

"For me, it's therapy. Being involved in The American Legion has changed my life. I was on the way to being a statistic. It's about keeping myself focused on doing something good. When you are a veteran with PTSD and you are focusing on the negative, your life becomes a big negative. It's about doing something positive and being a positive influence on others."

— Henry Howard

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AMERICAN LEGION POST Laramore-Osborne Post 100, Royse City, Texas

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- District Oratorical chairman (2017-present)
- District Children & Youth chairman (2019-present)
- Department Children & Youth chairman (2017-present)
- National Cemetery Committee member (2019-present)

Watch an interview of Jason Castleberry online:

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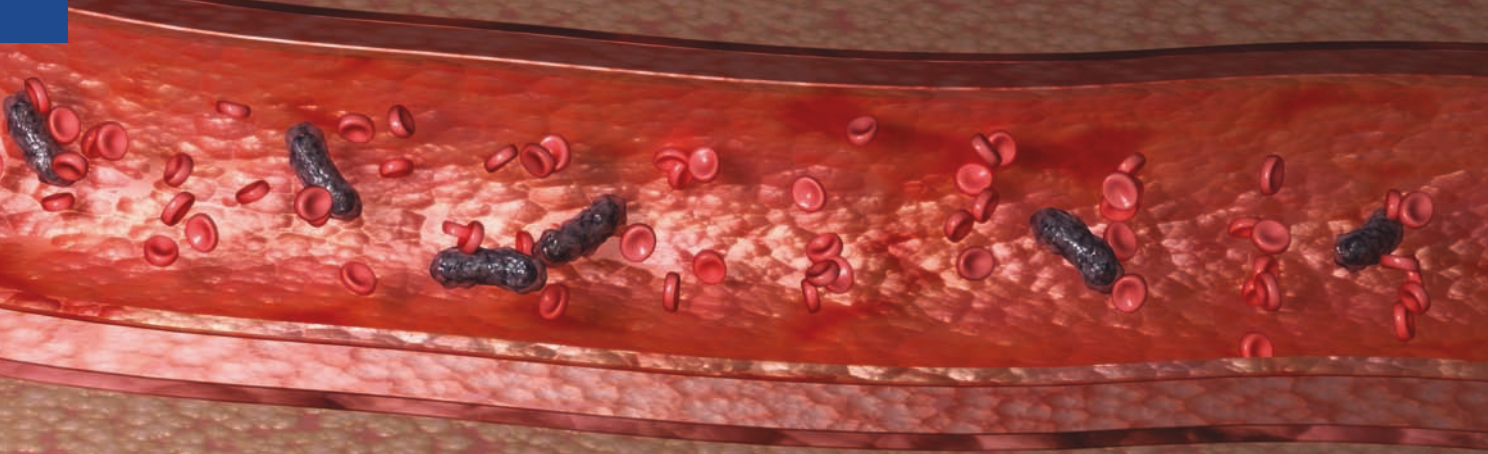


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HIDDEN KILLER

What you need to know about sepsis.

Media Bakery

BY MARTIN SAYERS

While it's widely known that heart disease and cancer are the leading causes of death in the United States, few are aware that sepsis – known as the “hidden killer” – is not far behind.

Sepsis occurs when an infection causes the body's immune system to go into overdrive. It kills 258,000 Americans each year and leaves many others seriously ill, with life-changing injuries such as amputated limbs or irreversible damage to organs.

Sepsis can happen through seemingly minor infections (cystitis, appendicitis and cellulitis, for example), as well as more serious conditions such as meningitis and pneumonia.

Many people have never heard of sepsis. This is partly because it always occurs in the presence of another infection, so doctors will often describe the underlying infection to family members rather than risk confusing them with an explanation of sepsis.

What exactly is sepsis? Sepsis is a clinical condition caused by the body's extreme response to an infection, says Steve Claypool, medical director at Wolters Kluwer Health and a nationally recognized expert in sepsis detection. “It can be triggered by almost any infection, but severe bacterial infections trigger sepsis more commonly than others. Sepsis results in reduced blood flow to body tissues and organs – meaning less nutrients and oxygen – which can lead to a failure of body organs and even death.”

What are the symptoms of sepsis? Symptoms of the infection will be present – fever and chills, coughing (if pneumonia), urinary symptoms (if bladder infection), and so on, Claypool says. “Additionally, patients often experience malaise that may be accompanied by shortness of breath, racing heart rate, paleness, confusion or a change in level of alertness.”

What can be done to protect against sepsis? Remember, sepsis is a reaction to an existing infection. So patients should

pay attention to the illness being out of proportion with what is normally expected from that condition. People should keep a close watch on loved ones who develop an infection, and if any of the symptoms described above develop, they should seek medical assistance as soon as possible. The chances of surviving sepsis are highly dependent on rapid access to intensive medical care.

Avoiding infection in the first place is obviously the best way to guard against sepsis. So good personal hygiene and ensuring any wounds are cleanly dressed and kept dirt-free are sensible precautions, as well as keeping up to date with vaccines that guard against common infections.

Who is at risk? Sepsis can strike anyone at any age, those who lead healthy lives and those who don't.

However, certain groups are more vulnerable than others, either because they are more prone to infections or because their immune system is underperforming. These at-risk groups include people older than 55, those undergoing medication that reduces immunity (such as chemotherapy), pregnant women, babies and young children, as well as people battling diseases that weaken the immune system (diabetes, AIDS, and kidney or liver disease).

How is sepsis treated? If spotted in time, sepsis can be treated through antibiotics, IV fluid and adrenaline-like medications called vasopressors. Specific tests are used to monitor patients for signs of progression of the disease and to adjust treatments.

With sepsis, early identification saves lives. The sooner the health-care team identifies and treats it, the better. Every hour's delay in treatment significantly increases the risk of death.

Martin Sayers is a freelance writer living in Cambridge, England. He specializes in health and nutrition issues.



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Media Bakery

Healthy habits add years

Harvard researchers recently published findings from a massive longitudinal study concluding that Americans who engage in five key healthy habits can add more than a decade to their lives, as the UK's *Guardian* reports.

The five healthy "habits" are roughly defined and measured as:

- Not smoking;
- Having a body mass index between 18.5 and 25;
- Engaging in at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise daily;
- Having no more than one glass of wine per day for women and no more than two per day for men; and,
- Having a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains but low in red meat, saturated fats and sugar.

The Harvard research team used lifestyle questionnaires and medical records from 123,000 volunteers to understand how much longer people lived if they followed a healthy diet, controlled their weight, regularly exercised, drank in moderation and did not smoke. The questionnaires charted some 30 years of lifestyle behaviors. The team found "dramatic effects" from the healthy habits, according to the *Guardian*.

"Compared with people who adopted none of them, men and women who adhered to all five saw their life expectancy at 50 rise from 26 to 38 years and 29 to 43 years, respectively" – an extra 12 years for men and 14 years for women.

People who follow the five identified healthy habits are 82 percent less likely to die of heart disease and 65 percent less likely to die of cancer.

Not surprisingly, just 8 percent of the population follows all five.

The study is published in the journal *Circulation*.

Plant-based diet counters diabetes

A plant-based diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts can significantly lower type 2 diabetes risk, CNN reports.

"We found that eating plant-based diets was associated with an, on average, 23 percent reduction in diabetes risk," said Qi Sun, an associate professor in the Department of Nutrition at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health. His team's study was published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

That's only part of the findings. Those who consumed a healthy version of the plant-based diet by emphasizing fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and legumes – and minimizing sugar-sweetened beverages and refined carbohydrates – had a further 30 percent reduction in their risk of developing type 2 diabetes. "I would describe these risk reductions as being quite significant," Sun said.

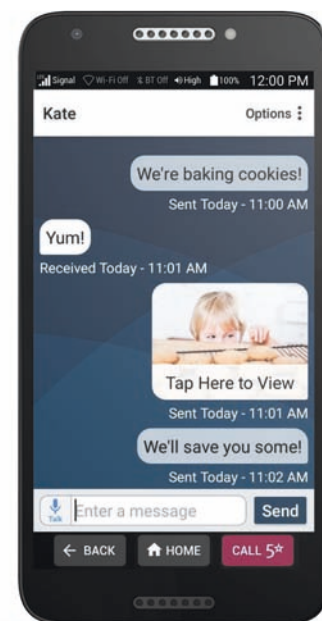


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MYSTERIES OF THE MIND

WANTED: Your Brain

Fast-advancing progress toward prevention and treatment of injuries and disease depends on donations.

BY JEFF STOFFER
PHOTOS BY RYAN YOUNG

Research scientists in Boston wish they had more brains.

One they can expect is that of a former Harvard University football player who wants to know, preferably before he dies, exactly what happened inside his skull after he was kicked in the head during a professional wrestling match in 2003.

A brain the researchers have already examined came from a Navy Special Warfare veteran who lost his battle with head injuries in September 2018, to suicide.


The scientists, the former athlete and the surviving wife of the 25-year retired Navy chief are making the same uneasy ask. They want anyone who is willing to donate that most complex and mysterious of organs, regardless of its condition or how it functioned during life, so more can be learned to prevent and treat brain injury and disease. While their primary targets are former football players and military veterans, they will take – *and need* – all the brains they can get because the more they have, the more can be learned to improve chances to save lives in the future.

“It’s not like a normal organ donation, which doesn’t include the brain,” says Nicole Condrey of Middletown, Ohio, who endured her husband’s downward churn through a three-year storm of traumatic brain injury issues – depression, anger, impulsiveness, withdrawal, suicidality – until he shot himself in the chest while holding her hand, in their RV, their service dog nearby, a week before they were supposed to close on their first home together.

Hours after his death, Nicole got a call from former Navy SEAL and author Jason Redman, who asked, on behalf of the Concussion Legacy Foundation (CLF), if she would donate her husband’s brain. “I said, ‘Absolutely. We need to get his brain in.’”

“The (CLF) is working to raise awareness that you can pledge to donate your brain separately through





Nicole Condrey, a world-class skydiver, is dedicated to helping veterans who are struggling with the effects of traumatic brain injury, which took her husband's life in 2018. Today, she lends her name and voice in the call for brain donations to advance understanding of our most complex organ.

projectenlist.org. They don't just need veterans' brains. They don't just need athletes' brains, because in science you need a baseline. They need anybody's brain. I have pledged to donate my brain to science when I die. You have to tell your family and your loved ones. Ultimately, the next of kin are the ones who have to make that decision ... I do know that they do not collect early."

The CLF was co-founded in 2007 by Chris Nowinski, who played football in high school and four years at Harvard as a defensive tackle before he entered the WWE arena as "Chris Harvard," a chiseled 270-pound, 6-foot-5 competitor who typically wore an H letter jacket as part of his shtick. Three years of training, heavy travel and regular blows to the head ended his career on the circuit a few weeks after a kick from "Bubba Ray Dudley" put him on his back in Hartford, Conn. "Something was wrong with my vision," he later wrote of that moment. "I didn't know where I was, what was happening around me, or why I was staring up at fuzzy-looking lights on the distant ceiling of a gigantic arena – I only knew that something was terribly wrong."

He wrestled a few more times following that, battling painfully through whatever was suddenly wrong with his head, until it was obvious he could not continue. At that point, he set his rewired mind to a better understanding of concussions and their effects. His 2006 book "Head Games" is now in its third edition and was the subject of a documentary that explored the effects of concussions among football players, which made headlines in *The New York Times*, led to congressional hearings and influenced changes in the game.



Neuropathologist Ann McKee dissects a donated brain at the VA-BU-CLF Brain Bank in Boston.

“I was fearless,” says Nowinski, who now has a Ph.D. in behavioral neuroscience. “When I give lectures on neuroscience, I show how crazy I was with my own brain. I let people hit me in the head with chairs and objects. The head butt was my move in football. I have two bad shoulders, so I hit you with my head. I did things that I regret.”

He regrets them now but had no idea at the time that multiple blows to the head had probably damaged his tau – a protein that holds certain brain cells together so they can deliver messages that affect executive functions, mood, vision, sleep and other operations among a mind-boggling list of tau-assisted responsibilities. He had no idea then, nor is he sure now, that he was confronting the degenerative brain disease chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), which cannot yet be detected among the living. Its presence can only be confirmed through laboratory examination of a sufferer’s brain tissue.

Identification of CTE before death is one goal of the Concussion Legacy Foundation and pioneering neuropathologist Ann McKee of VA and Boston University, who runs the VA-BU-CLF Brain Bank at the Jamaica Plain campus of the VA Boston Healthcare System. The bank opened 25 years ago as a two-person lab at the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital – the Bedford, Mass., VA medical center – and studied donated brains to seek answers about such conditions as Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.

Over the past decade, largely due to Nowinski’s persistence, the brain bank has evolved, grown and captured national attention. The brains of former National Football League (NFL) players who suffered severe and often deadly effects of post-concussive syndrome following their careers have been examined, one after another, by McKee and her team. The program has grown to four neuropathologists, four technicians and 20 other

staff members, supported by VA. They now have more than 1,100 donated brains in the bank, which are studied for multiple conditions.

In most cases, especially early, the growing number of football player brains came after Nowinski cold-called families to make the uneasy ask. As NFL families agreed to have their loved ones’ brains studied, evidence mounted. Four of the first four had CTE. Now, out of 111 former NFL players’ brains studied by McKee, CTE has been identified in 110. Among them was the high-profile case of former New England Patriots star tight end Aaron Hernandez, who in 2017 died by suicide in a jail cell at 27 following a highly publicized murder conviction and a string of irrational acts. “I was stunned that Aaron Hernandez had so much disease,” McKee said. “For some reason, you think it’s not going to happen. And then it does.”

Traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder have been called the “signature wounds” among post-9/11 veterans. Blasts from improvised explosive devices, crashes, falls and other blows to the head have come with the territory of training and fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ron Condrey did not have any one major head injury, his wife explains, but he sustained multiple concussive events over the years, perhaps 20 in all.

“He had a motorcycle accident during his Navy training,” Nicole says. “I think that was the start to a lot of things. After that, he fell down a mountain in Afghanistan on some mission. He had a Humvee roll over. He had a helicopter crash. As an EOD (explosive ordnance disposal) tech, you’re around explosives. Repeatedly, over and over throughout his career. Big ones. Small ones. You have one (concussion) and then the next one compounds itself, and then the next one and the next one. Individually, he might have been OK had he only had one.”

A Notre Dame-educated electrical engineer, Nicole had been a civilian IED countermeasures analyst for the U.S. Army in Afghanistan. Ron, who had been committed to the Navy since 17, was a beloved combat leader and highly trained paratrooper. Their paths never crossed in theater, but they found each other in 2013 when she was trying to get her initial skydiving license in Suffolk, Va. He was an experienced trainer, and they soon discovered they had more than jumping out of airplanes as a common interest. “We both kind of dealt with IEDs in different ways, but we never met each other until later. When we did, we had a lot of similar connections.”

Ron had been jumping for more than 15 years,

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and pushed Nicole to keep training and working to become a master skydiver. “I was his apprentice, you might say,” she says.

They loved extreme outdoor recreation, and each other. By the time they married July 30, 2015, however, Ron had already shown signs of brain injury, including a suicide attempt earlier that year. “It was a pretty bad one. His buddies came and said, ‘Hey, we need to get him help.’ I’d been trying to get them to understand for a while that there was something going on with his brain. It took a suicide attempt. He was still in the Navy at the time. They said, ‘Yeah, we should intervene.’”

He enrolled in DoD treatment programs in Portsmouth, Va., and Bethesda, Md. Nicole accompanied him to appointments in the early months of their marriage. Soon, it was clear he needed to get out of the Navy, perhaps with a medical discharge, but he had enough years to retire in May 2017.

By that time, she explained, his condition was plummeting. “It was like a roller coaster. I’m sure anyone who has been a caregiver, or a spouse or a loved one – someone going through this – could tell you the same story. One day, he could be doing really great and the next day just in the dumps. Or one hour doing great and the next hour not.”

That’s when they were given Via, a trained service dog. “Ron really liked a lot of the Latin words that are used in the military,” Nicole says of her name. “Via directly translates to ‘road’ or ‘street.’ But it can also have the meaning of journey or path. So we picked that name because she was an important part of Ron’s journey.”

Initially diagnosed with major depressive disorder, “which stems directly from the traumatic brain injuries and the post-traumatic stress,” she explains, Ron’s condition was later characterized by VA as PTSD with some TBI, and he was given a 100 percent disability rating. “Lots of different meds,” she recalls. “And the meds make you gain weight. For a warrior to gain weight, it’s a sign of weakness. He felt even worse, and his view of himself went down the tube even more.”

She says he tried prolonged exposure treatment, but that wasn’t effective because Ron had no single triggering event. “The idea is that there is an event that is really haunting you or bothering you on a regular basis. For Ron, he was a warrior. He expected to see everything he saw. There wasn’t one event. But they really wanted to help him with his post-traumatic stress. Prolonged exposure was the key, or so they said. He got worse. There wasn’t *an* event for Ron. There were events, but



Chris Nowinski is co-founder and executive director of the Concussion Legacy Foundation in Boston.

they happened to his brain, concussively, not his psychological state.”

By that time, Nowinski, McKee and the VA-BU-CLF Brain Bank were advancing scientific understanding of the links between concussions and psychological behavior. More and more brains were coming in, particularly from former athletes, and a growing number from veterans who had been diagnosed with TBI and PTSD, which are studied together and separately for the presence, or not, of CTE.

“Traumatic brain injury can be an acute injury – a blow to the head, a subdural or epidural (bleed) – and it can be a major injury with loss of consciousness, amnesia, neurological deficits,” McKee says. “Or it can be a mild injury. There are all types of severities – mild, moderate and severe. Mild TBI is what I am primarily concerned with. You don’t see a bruise. There is no blood on their scalp or anything. It’s a subtle injury, but it can have long-term consequences. What we know from our research now is that if you sustain these mild TBIs – enough of them over a long period of time – it dramatically increases your risk for ... CTE. It’s like the brain gradually breaks down, bit by bit.

“A TBI is like a car accident. A car accident can be a big accident. It can be a small accident. A mild TBI, or a concussion, is more like you’ve got a car on a really bumpy road, and you just keep driving on it, and your car slowly breaks down. It’s a long-term consequence – subtle damage that occurs over years.

“PTSD is a complex set of symptoms. They can be sleep difficulties, anxiety, all sorts of things. And it is usually related to trauma. The trauma doesn’t have to be physical. It doesn’t have to be a

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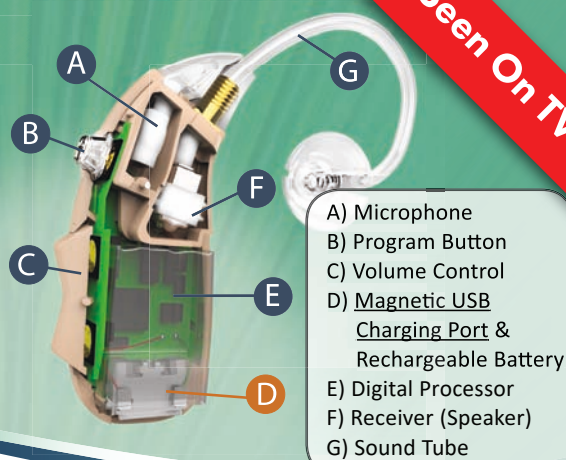
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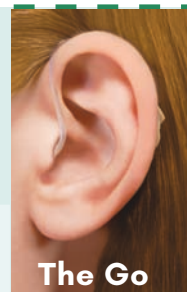


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TBI. It can be psychological trauma. It can be sexual trauma. What we have found is that individuals exposed to trauma – psychological or even physical trauma – develop PTSD, which is this well-defined but complex set of symptoms. So, how does this fit in with TBI and CTE? How can you compartmentalize those? It's not easy, and we are still working on it. There are people with PTSD and no trauma, PTSD and no CTE, and we also know – because we have a big brain bank here for PTSD – that some of those cases have CTE.”

“For them to stamp PTSD on his medical record, it was all they knew how to diagnose,” Nicole says of her husband’s situation. “The problem is, how do you really diagnose it? The symptoms are so similar.”

One therapy that seemed to work was skydiving. “It was something physical he could repeatedly do,” Nicole says. “In theory, it was supposed to help his brain recover and heal.”

Moreover, she adds, “He was really good at skydiving. He loved it, and he loved giving back.” He had more than 5,000 recorded jumps over his career. He’d also been booked to do demonstration jumps at various venues, including Soldier Field in Chicago – 10 of which he did with Via. “She doesn’t like the plane much,” Nicole says of their skydiving service dog. “But the second she gets out of the plane, it’s like any dog putting its head out the car window.”

The stars were thus aligned for the Condreys to pack up and move to Middletown, home of Team Fastrax, which teaches skydiving, performs demonstration jumps at big events – typically involving huge U.S. flags – and competes against other skydiving teams around the world. It was something they could do together, especially after they saw the team’s annual Warrior Weekend to Remember event where Gold Star Families and disabled veterans gather for a weekend of skydiving and camaraderie.

“If you’re a combat-disabled veteran, you jump for free,” Nicole says. “We were in it to inspire people and be a part of the community, and get people to get outside their comfort zones and do great things.”

Ron’s condition, however, worsened as his neurons continued to misfire. “Ron was in a really bad state the last six months. He actually got to the point where he stopped jumping. He didn’t enjoy anything about it anymore. And this is something you see in people who can be depressed. They don’t enjoy the things they loved to do before. He was a recluse. He didn’t go out at all. He would

push everyone away, including me and his service dog ... and we were keeping him alive at the time.”

In late August 2018, he checked into a private-sector retreat for veterans. He came home with a sudden appreciation for everything around him. “He was a totally different man. I was euphoric, but I had this feeling in my gut that I couldn’t pinpoint.”

A few days later, the euphoria was gone. The roller coaster descended, fast. As for the retreat, “I think Ron got there too late. He had gotten so far into that hole without getting back up, it just took one more bad place, one more bad moment, for him to not see his way out of it. His brain wasn’t thinking logically at that time.”

It was about 4 in the afternoon when he pulled the trigger. “I can’t tell you why that day,” she says. She called 911 and then the Team Fastrax hangar. “They were here for me. I have an extended family that has been through a lot with me.”

The decision to donate his brain to the bank came without hesitation. “Ron wanted to give back to veterans in every way he could, so it was just a clear fit, something that could last.”

“It’s terrible to lose these guys,” Nowinski says. “If we can do anything to stem the tide ... so many people are committed to suicide-prevention campaigns, but it still happens. We need to understand how we can do more to help.

“We have learned more about our brains in the last decade than we have in all of human history,” he adds. “The brain is the last great frontier. It’s so complex. We are only beginning to understand its complexity. So sometimes the only way to really appreciate it, since it’s hidden inside of our skull, is to actually look at it under a microscope after somebody has passed away. What’s been amazing, doing this work for a decade now with the most amazing researchers in the world at VA and Boston University, is that we make breakthroughs every year, because this work hasn’t been done before.”

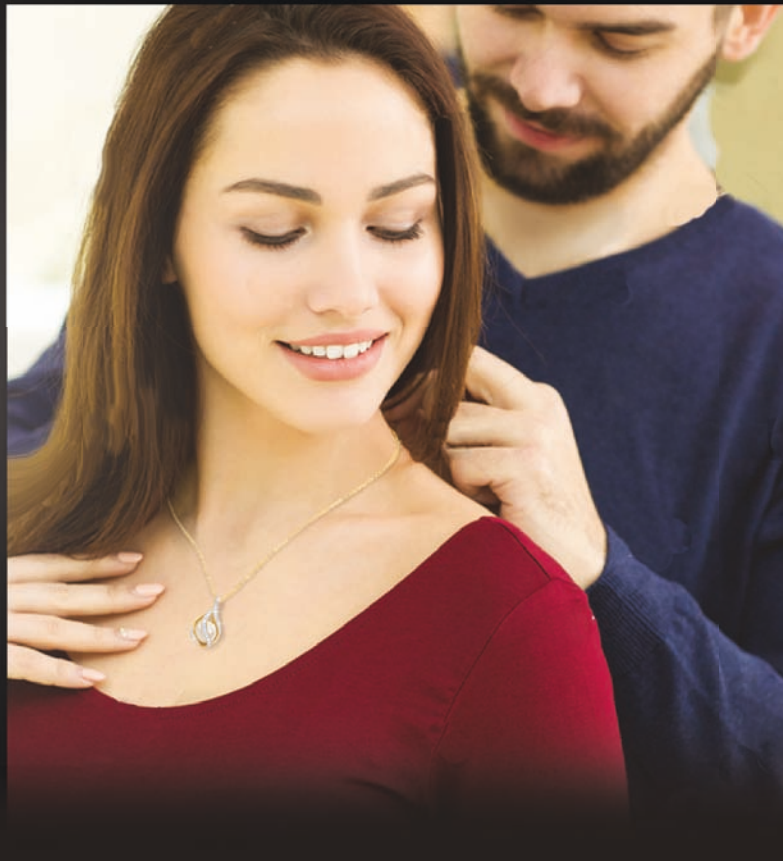
New rules about helmet-to-helmet hits, player suspensions for multiple such penalties, warning posters in locker rooms, research and development of safer helmets, and regulations about returning players to the field after concussions are among the steps football has taken since the CLF was established. “Football is dramatically safer today than when I played it,” Nowinski says. “We are not doing all the stupid things we did back then. (But) the reality is, we are still creating CTE in people’s brains.” He says raising the age limit for tackle football can help by reducing the number of years a player is exposed to repeated blows to the head.



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“Football is not the problem,” he says. “It’s too much football. I think the future of football is non-tackle versions until high school.” Adult athletes – as with firefighters, police officers and military personnel who risk head injury but understand the risks, Nowinski says – are different from children who often start cracking heads with one another on the gridiron as young as 5.

The route between head injuries and CTE is different for military personnel, McKee says, but they commonly lead to the same destination. “What I can say about military veterans who have been exposed to either blast or concussive trauma is that it’s not as predictable as football. Football tends to be a relatively stereotyped exposure. They tend to do relatively the same things every time they go out and play. But a military person, a veteran – it’s pretty random. Are they in combat? Are they not? Where are they in combat? What are their exposures? Were they driving down the road where there was a blast? Where were they standing or where were they sitting in relationship to the exposure? There are so many variables. It’s much more complex.”

Scanning and imaging technology can only go so far to detect and understand brain disease, McKee says. More is learned by cutting into brains and carefully studying their conditions after death.

“I could never have seen (CTE) using an imaging technique. You can only find, in imaging, what you are looking for. You have to know what you are looking for, target it and find it. There is exploration and discovery in neuropathology that is not possible with neuroimaging.”

The research, Nicole says, can provide guidance for the military before assignments that may include exposure to head trauma. “Right now, the military is not doing neuro-psych evals on entry for EOD techs,” she says. “We have to have a baseline ... when they first get into the military, into sports, whatever it might be. All of our brains are different. Then, throughout someone’s career, if they have had an injury to the brain, they need to be tested again. Regularly. If we were able to do it regularly, we could stop it earlier. Ultimately, the goal is keeping people from getting long-lasting TBI symptoms. The research and the data are extremely important, the end goal being that we don’t get people in that state.”

Nowinski adds, “If we change how we play sports and how we conduct military training, we can create better outcomes.”

Treatment of CTE’s effects depends on seeing it in the first place, McKee says. “The basic

cornerstone of treatment is detection ... during life. If we can do that – if we have a biomarker, something in the blood or saliva or spinal fluid, or if we have an imaging technique that can pick up CTE – then we can treat it. We would have lots of ideas how to treat it. We have anti-tau therapeutics. There are anti-inflammatory therapeutics. There’s a gamut of possibilities.”

To get there, it’s going to take donated brains, she says. “It’s very important to have the brains. That informs us how to do the detection.”

“I think (the brain) is more powerful than we have any idea about,” Nicole explains. “It’s also susceptible. It’s fragile. We can do great things with our brains, but if we don’t protect it, if we have a concussive incident, we need to be sure to take a timeout and step away from that activity before we go back into it again.

“If we do something else again right away and get another concussion, our brain is going to have a much harder time healing. Learning more about our brains and what can happen to them is extremely important, so we can be those fully functioning warriors.”

“We are now honestly addressing the issue,” Nowinski says. “We have a tremendous opportunity to prevent this problem going forward by changing what we’re doing. But also, there are generations of people dealing with this disease, whether they are athletes or veterans, and we don’t have an answer for them. We need to invest in research so we can create better answers.”

To that end, Nicole says she is driven to help CLF make the uneasy ask. “I am taking Ron’s spirit with me in all of this,” she says. “I would call it a passion because I loved him so much.”

Adding military, veteran and control brains to the bank will “help us solve this problem,” Nowinski says. “Go to projectenlist.org and sign up to pledge your brain. Follow the instructions. Hopefully, we won’t get your brain for a very long time, but you will be part of an important mission going forward to cure this.”

There is no cost, he adds, and every family gets a full report of the findings. “We treat every family like our own.

“I now look back and realize I was very lucky to get kicked in the head by Bubba Ray Dudley in that wrestling match in 2003. It has allowed me to do work that I am passionate about. And this work is helping people.” 🌿

Jeff Stoffer is editor of The American Legion Magazine.

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'JACKPOT'

The death of Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is a pivotal victory in the war on terrorism.

BY ALAN W. DOWD

Mounting what President Trump called a “dangerous and daring nighttime raid,” a helicopter-borne assault team of Delta Force operators and Army Rangers swept into northwestern Syria on Oct. 26 and eliminated Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, founding leader of the Islamic State (ISIS). The mission commander’s message, as his team completed the operation, was simple and certain: “One hundred percent confidence. Jackpot.”

Baghdadi used the rubble of al-Qaida in Iraq as the building blocks for a jihadist superpower in ISIS that, at its height, controlled more territory, had broader appeal, fielded more fighters, possessed more financial resources, and killed more ruthlessly than al-Qaida.

The Baghdadi raid – codenamed “Operation Kayla Mueller,” in memory of one of Baghdadi’s victims – didn’t end ISIS, let alone the war on terrorism. But it did mark an important victory in the ongoing struggle against jihadist groups. As such, it offers a number of lessons for the broader war on terrorism.

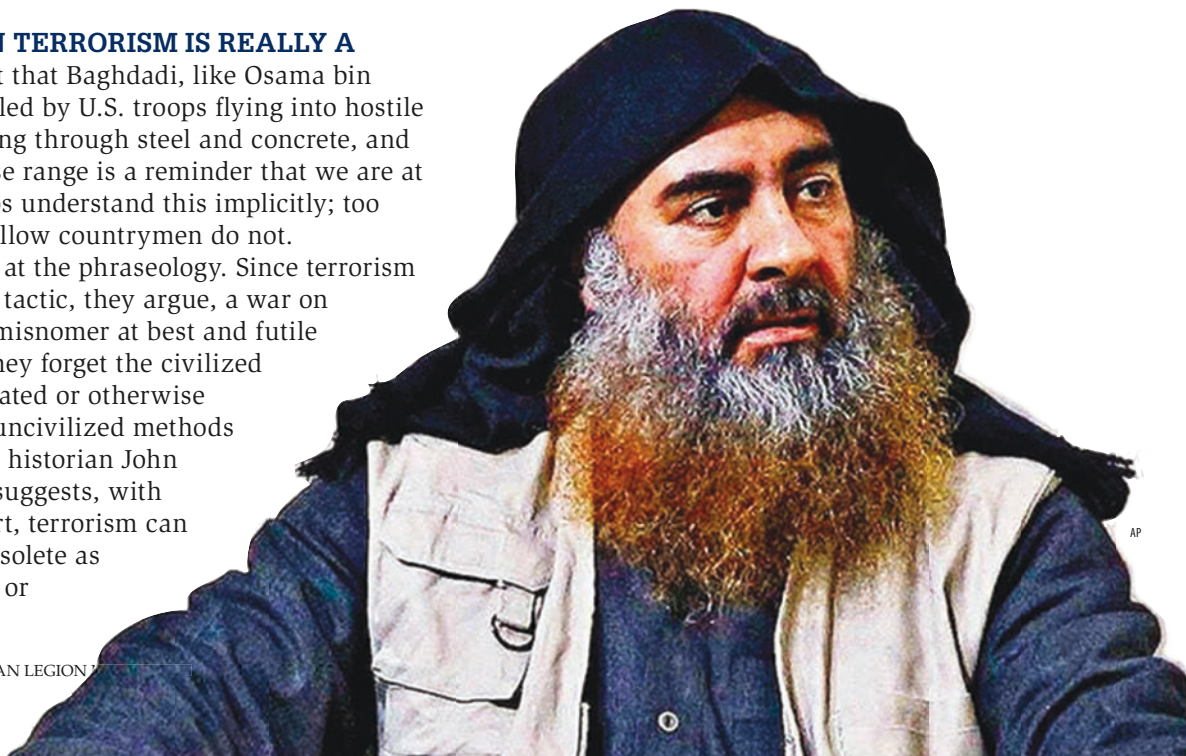
THE WAR ON TERRORISM IS REALLY A WAR. The fact that Baghdadi, like Osama bin Laden, was killed by U.S. troops flying into hostile territory, busting through steel and concrete, and striking at close range is a reminder that we are at war. Our troops understand this implicitly; too many of our fellow countrymen do not.

Some bristle at the phraseology. Since terrorism is a method or tactic, they argue, a war on terrorism is a misnomer at best and futile at worst. Yet they forget the civilized world has defeated or otherwise marginalized uncivilized methods and tactics. As historian John Lewis Gaddis suggests, with concerted effort, terrorism can “become as obsolete as slavery, piracy or genocide.”

THIS WAR WILL TAKE DECADES TO WIN. As with al-Qaida after bin Laden’s takedown, ISIS will continue to sow death and destruction after Baghdadi. That’s because we are fighting an ideology, not an individual.

ISIS will become more diffuse – and hence more difficult to fix, target and destroy. After all, it’s harder to engage a stateless entity than something that, like the Islamic State under Baghdadi, possesses territory and masses personnel in the open. Indeed, since the collapse of the caliphate, ISIS has shifted to insurgency operations and traditional terrorist attacks.

In announcing Baghdadi’s successor, Abu Ibrahim al-Qurayshi, ISIS pointedly warned, “Do not rejoice, America. The new chosen one will ... make the achievements of the Baghdadi days taste sweet.” That’s not an empty threat: ISIS boasts 14,000 fighters, and the FBI has 1,000 active investigations into ISIS-inspired operatives in all 50 states.



AMERICA REMEMBERS PRESENTS

The Vietnam Veterans Tribute Thompson

HONORING ALL THOSE WHO SERVED IN VIETNAM

Our men and women came from all over the country, from all walks of life, to fight for freedom on the other side of the world. They served with honor, dignity, and courage. All gave some, some gave all, and many are still missing and unaccounted for. As a nation, we owe all of our Vietnam Veterans a debt that can never be repaid.

Nothing about the Vietnam War was easy. Those who were there remember the swampy grasslands, rice paddies, dense jungles, the heat and an elusive enemy; a war that took place halfway around the world in a country divided by decades of bitter history.

Few generations faced a more daunting challenge than those who fought in Southeast Asia. Few generations are more deserving of our gratitude and respect. To honor all those who served in Vietnam, America Remembers presents the **Vietnam Veterans Tribute Thompson**. Craftsmen commissioned specifically for this project by America Remembers decorate each Thompson in elegant 24-karat gold artwork on a mirror-polished nickel-decorated receiver. Issued in an exclusive limited edition of only 1,000 Tributes, this handsome firearm captures the courage and sacrifice of all those who fought for freedom in Vietnam.

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We know there will never be another American-made firearm like the Thompson submachine gun. And there will never be more dedicated men and women than those who bravely served their country in Vietnam.

Much like the generations of warriors who came before, those who served with valor in Vietnam deserve their place in American history.

They didn't hesitate to put their lives on the line and give up everything in defense of our liberty and freedom. Some made the ultimate sacrifice. Others returned home to a divided nation. All of them deserve our gratitude.

During the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, there has been a strong interest in firearm Tributes honoring those who served in Vietnam. Demand for this Tribute is expected to be strong. Order now to guarantee your place in the edition. We will arrange delivery through the licensed firearms dealer of your choice (not available in CA, CT, MD, NY). If for any reason you are not completely satisfied with your Tribute, you may return it in original, unfired condition within 30 days for a complete and courteous refund.

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If you are a veteran who answered the call to duty in Vietnam, or if you wish to honor your father, husband, brother, friend or other family member, the Vietnam Veterans Tribute Thompson is sure to become a cherished addition to your collection. Order today to secure your Tribute honoring those who proudly served our nation in Vietnam.

▼ Both sides of the receiver feature emblems that honor Vietnam War veterans. The banner reads: "A Grateful Nation Remembers," and inside the oval is a lone American soldier, the distinctive silhouette of Vietnam and a pair of U.S. military helicopters. The emblem on the right side is framed with a banner reading: "Vietnam Veterans Tribute Thompson".

▼ Left side of the receiver features a soldier with his M60 machine gun--nicknamed "The Pig" for its hefty size. The M60 unleashed a fury of firepower on the enemy. Also featured is a M48-A3 Patton tank providing cover as troops enter a village. The M48 was a workhorse during the Vietnam War.

▲ Right side also features a soldier scanning the distance for enemy movement. A pair of M48 tanks make their way on the ground while the sky is abuzz with helicopters, which played such an important role during the Vietnam War. On the far end of the receiver, you'll find a Marine and his M16. Along with the Huey, the legendary M16 has become a symbol of combat service in Vietnam. Introduced to the battlefield in 1964, the M16 was a lightweight assault rifle that proved invaluable in jungle firefights. Right side features an image of the iconic Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal presented by Republic of Vietnam to members of the United States military who completed at least six months of duty in the war, with a frame reading: "Vietnam War - All Gave Some, Some Gave All." Below it you'll find a banner that reads: "Lest We Forget."

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Counterterrorism expert Bruce Hoffman warns that ISIS might ally itself again with al-Qaida, which could lead to “an even greater global terrorist threat.” To blunt that – to prevent more Bastille Day massacres, more San Bernardinis and Orlandos, more Paris sieges and 9/11s – will require more commando raids, more airstrikes, more intelligence cooperation, more vigilance, more time.

How much more time? Days after 9/11, President George W. Bush tried to brace America for “a lengthy campaign unlike any other we have ever seen.” Almost a decade would pass before SEAL Team Six eliminated bin Laden. It took five years to tear down the ISIS caliphate and track down Baghdadi. And it will take several more years to defeat the global insurgency bin Laden launched in 1996. In 2001, Adm. Michael Boyce, then-chief of the British Defense Staff, suggested 50 years. In 2015, Gen. Martin Dempsey, then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs, called the war on terrorism “a 30-year issue.”

Put another way, in its duration, geographic scope, ideological dimensions, and economic and human costs, the war on terrorism is best understood through the prism of the Cold War: a generational struggle that will take decades to win.

THE UNITED STATES NEEDS PARTNERS.

No nation possesses the capabilities and enjoys the requisite global goodwill to do what America does: serve as civilization’s first responder and last line of defense, hunt and eliminate Baghdadi, rescue besieged Yazidis, roll back ISIS. Yet the Baghdadi raid serves as a reminder that America needs partners and allies.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) played a key role in providing intelligence leading to Baghdadi’s hideout. Thirty nations contributed troops to the anti-ISIS campaign. Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Jordan and the Netherlands joined the United States in airstrikes targeting ISIS in Iraq and Syria. The French aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle* served as a command center during anti-ISIS operations.

Together, this coalition freed 7.7 million people from Baghdadi’s death cult, liberated 42,471 square miles of territory and eliminated more than 70,000 ISIS fighters.

LOCATION MATTERS. The Baghdadi strike took place just days after the president ordered

a pullout from Syria. The irony is that elements of the operation launched from inside Syria. Moreover, before the pullback, U.S. and SDF units conducted a dozen counterterror missions per day. Those missions kept the United States plugged into vast amounts of intel and kept the enemy focused on survival.

“You can pull your troops out, as President Obama learned the hard way, out of Iraq, but the enemy gets a vote,” Gen. James Mattis warns. “If we don’t keep the pressure on them, ISIS will resurge.”

If Baghdadi was the jackpot, the gamble is America’s diminished footprint in Syria.

THE ENEMY IS VILE AND VICIOUS. The Islamic State has been called “worse than al-Qaida,” perhaps deservedly so. As proof of its savage piety, Baghdadi’s terror state summarily executed imams and aid workers; drowned and burned alive prisoners of war; conducted genocide against Shia Muslims, Yazidis and Christians; ordered Christians to convert or die; sold children into slavery; used “mentally challenged” children as suicide bombers; and conducted a systematic campaign of rape.

As the U.S. assault team closed in on Baghdadi, this mass murderer masquerading as a holy man dragged two children with him into a tunnel. They died as he detonated his suicide vest. How horrifically fitting that a murder-suicide-kidnapping was the final act of the man who spawned an organization built on mass murder, suicide bombings and the enslavement of thousands.

AMERICA REMEMBERS. The Baghdadi raid re-reminds the world that the United States can be tenacious and patient; that our political system can sustain long, twilight struggles; and that our military will do anything to liberate the oppressed, rescue the helpless and avenge our fallen.

“We learned from women that were ransomed,” Mueller’s father reported, that she “was raped by al-Baghdadi” and “murdered by him or someone in his organization.”

Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley named the operation for Mueller – a powerful signal that America’s memory and reach are long. 🌿

Alan W. Dowd is a senior fellow with the Sagamore Institute.

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A hall of real-life superheroes



Medal of Honor center will be 'unique among all the museums of the world.'

U.S. Air Force

BY PATRICK H. BRADY

Medal of Honor (MOH) recipients trace our roots to Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War. On our roll are names that will forever be a part of American history: Sgt. York, Buffalo Bill, Charles Lindbergh, Teddy Roosevelt, Douglas MacArthur and Jimmy Doolittle.

No other group better represents the courage, diversity, capacity for selflessness, compassion and honor so characteristic of the majority of our people. We count among us pioneers and leaders in every aspect of our culture. Most religions are represented, as is every race.

There are generals and privates, paupers and millionaires, teachers, lawyers, doctors, poets, and men of God, chaplains. Prisoners, as in POWs and convicts. We are a collection of citizens who not only defended our culture but helped develop, design and enrich it, who turned America from plenty of land into a land of plenty. We are not characterized by wealth or rank or class, but by patriotism – the highest form of which is service to our youth. We believe life has no meaning unless lived for the benefit of future generations.

We have been honored time and again, but what we would like to see honored most are the values that motivated us. The Medal of Honor is a symbol, from the Greek “symbolon,” meaning “half token.” Joined with the other half, it represents something above and beyond itself. The other half token of

the U.S. flag, for instance, are the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. That is why when you burn our flag, you are symbolically burning the foundation of our country. The other half token of the MOH are courage, sacrifice and patriotism, which are the foundation of our freedoms and guardians of our Constitution. We don't believe we did America a favor by our service and sacrifice; we believe God did us a favor by allowing us to be born in this most exceptional country, where freedom is our birthright.

A patriot is not someone who simply says he loves his country, but proves he loves his country through his willingness to support and defend it. Sadly, for the first time in Gallup's 18-year history of asking how proud young people are to be Americans, less than a majority say they are “extremely proud.” The reason for this may be that patriotism is not as emphasized in education as it once was. A democratic society cannot survive without patriots.

Another source of our declining pride in the United States may be a lack of knowledge of who we are as a nation. A recent YouGov survey found that only one in six Americans can pass a basic U.S. history quiz. You cannot love who we are if you don't know who we are. This shift could prove disastrous in any crisis demanding the full support of our people.



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A plea of many disadvantaged students is that “you have not been where we have.” That is true in many cases, but not of MOH recipients. We have been where those students are and then some, making us uniquely effective as teachers and role models. With this in mind, we have created a free Character Development Program, online at **themedalofhonor.com/character-development**.

To clearly define patriotism, I tell the story of Webster Anderson, a great black soldier. Early one morning in Vietnam, his unit was attacked by communist forces. The initial attack pretty much took off both his legs. Yet he continued to fight. He caught a grenade, which blew off an arm as he tried to throw it clear of his men. Still he fought on. I flew in and picked up what was left of Webster after he had inspired his men to defeat the enemy. Miraculously, the medics saved his life, but his efforts to save his men cost him both legs and an arm, and earned him the Medal of Honor.

Webster and I became close friends, and years later spoke together at a school in Oklahoma. One of the children asked Webster if he would do what he did again, knowing what it would cost him. He said, “Kid, I only have one arm left, but my country can have it any time they want.”

In addition to our Career Development Program, MOH recipients are dedicated to further promote courage, sacrifice and patriotism by building a National Medal of Honor Museum. The concept is simple: 1) inspire and educate through stories like Webster’s; 2) honor our past heroes to inspire future leaders; and 3) grow patriots.

This museum will inspire patriotism, the lifeblood of a democracy. It will be a sanctuary for the stories, legacy and contributions of the medal’s recipients – a vault for our national values. We have museums to America’s wars and branches of service. The National Medal of Honor Museum will encompass them all, because MOH recipients served in each and every one. It will identify and connect the individual values that win on the battlefield to the education of those who will win the future of America. This museum will be unique among all the museums of the world.

It will focus on the psyche of young people entering an arena of superheroes who wore dog tags instead of capes. At the museum, they will be thrilled with visuals of individual courage and sacrifice, the foundation of their freedoms. They will realize that physical courage can win a battle but moral courage can change the world.

They will see on Mount Rushmore not only great Americans but an MOH recipient, Theodore

‘AMERICA’S NEXT NATIONAL TREASURE’

The National Medal of Honor Museum will be built in Arlington, Texas, and is expected to open in 2024 near Globe Life Park and AT&T Stadium. The museum’s president and CEO, Joe Daniels, said the city is the “optimal location to build America’s next national treasure.” Daniels served as CEO for the National 9/11 Memorial & Museum in New York City. Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter serve as honorary directors.

 mohmuseum.org

Roosevelt, who declared what has become the museum’s motto: “The lives of truest heroism are those in which there are no great deeds to look back upon. It is the little things well done that go to make up a truly successful and good life.”

They will learn that it was a MOH recipient who first flew solo across the Atlantic, who first flew in clouds using a gyro to open up the skies for all, who was the first commissioner of the American Football League. It was MOH recipients who were great athletes, a president, members of Congress, mayors, governors, journalists, actors, builders of our railroads, and generals who fought and won our wars. It was an MOH recipient who composed taps, who founded the CIA, and on and on.

We are not all born equal in terms of ability or opportunity, but in the one way that counts – matters of courage – we are all born equal. The key to success in life is mental, moral and physical courage, and God has made this gift infinitely available to all of us; you can’t use it up.

Students will walk out of the National Medal of Honor Museum with the conviction that they too can be heroes, understanding that the values of courage and sacrifice these men drew on to excel in combat they also drew on to excel in life, and as a result were a blessing to America. They will learn that fear is an emotion, but courage is a decision, and it is the great equalizer in life, producing great people from those among us who were not born with great ability or opportunity.

G.K. Chesterton said, “Art is the signature of man.” This museum will be the signature of all MOH recipients, and the values they embodied in our past and hope to inspire in our future. 🌿

Patrick H. Brady is a retired Army major general, Medal of Honor recipient and former chairman of the Citizens Flag Alliance.

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LORE OF THE LEGION

STORY: **JEFF STOFFER**
ART: **GARY MARTIN**
COLOR: **MARCHS ESKOW**

A COMMITTEE IS FORMED AT THE MAY 1919 ST. LOUIS CAUCHS. ITS PURPOSE: DESIGN AN AMERICAN LEGION EMBLEM OR BUTTON OF "UNENAMEED METAL." THE COMMITTEE PLANS TO OFFER CASH PRIZES OF \$50, \$25, \$15 AND \$10 "IN ORDER OF MERIT" FOR THE TOP SUBMISSIONS.

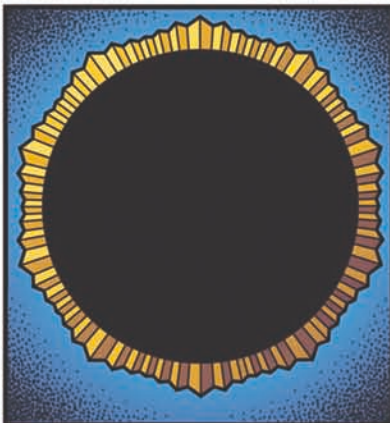
IN JUNE 1919, AS THE AMERICAN LEGION IS ROARING TO LIFE ACROSS THE LAND, FOUNDING SECRETARY ERIC FISHER WOOD DESIGNS A TEMPORARY EMBLEM UNTIL THE CONTEST CAN BE COMPLETED. IT INCLUDES A STAR, A LAUREL WREATH AND THE INITIALS U.S.

SUBMISSIONS DON'T STACK UP TO FISHER WOOD'S DESIGN. AT THE FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION IN MINNEAPOLIS, THE FOUNDER'S DESIGN IS MADE PERMANENT. ON DEC. 9, 1919, HIS EMBLEM DESIGN IS PATENTED AND TURNED OVER TO NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS.

THE MEANING OF THE EMBLEM'S PARTS WERE SUMMARIZED IN THE 1921 AMERICAN LEGION MANUAL OF CEREMONIES.

"THERE SHINES THE EMBLEM OF THE AMERICAN LEGION. IT IS YOUR BADGE OF DISTINCTION AND HONOR. IT STANDS FOR GOD AND COUNTRY AND THE HIGHEST RIGHTS OF MAN."

EACH PART OF THE EMBLEM HAS A MEANING.



THE RAYS OF THE SUN STAND FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY, LOYALTY AND OPPOSITION TO THE DARKNESS OF EVIL.



THE WREATH HONORS THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN SERVICE, THAT LIBERTY MIGHT ENDURE.



THE STAR, THE VICTORY SYMBOL OF WORLD WAR I, STANDS FOR HONOR, GLORY AND CONSTANCY.



TWO LARGE RINGS REPRESENT REHABILITATION FOR SICK AND DISABLED VETERANS (OUTER) AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN (INNER).



TWO SMALL RINGS PLACED OVER THE STAR STAND FOR LOYALTY, AMERICANISM AND SERVICE.



THE WORDS "AMERICAN LEGION" TIE THE PARTS TOGETHER "FOR TRUTH, REMEMBRANCE, CONSTANCY, HONOR, SERVICE, REHABILITATION, CHILD WELFARE, LOYALTY AND AMERICANISM."

#17



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The Tennessee Army National Guard armory in Chattanooga now bears the name of retired Brig. Gen. Carl Levi, a Korean War-era veteran and former American Legion state commander. Photo by Shawn Poynter

SERVICE

Chattanooga armory named for Tennessee Legionnaire

On Nov. 13, one of Tennessee's most esteemed veterans received yet another honor, when the National Guard armory in Chattanooga was redesignated with his name.

Retired Brig. Gen. Carl Levi, a 65-year member of The American Legion, says he was surprised last spring when he heard the Tennessee General Assembly had passed a bill adding his name to the historic facility.

"I am humbled," says Levi, 89. "I think of the thousands of people who have gone through that armory and that I'm the lucky one who got his name on the building."

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee joined Levi at the armory to sign the bill officially changing its name. "Gen. Levi is an outstanding Tennessean and exemplary public servant," Lee said. "We are grateful for his years of service to our country and are pleased to honor his legacy through the BG Carl E. Levi and CSM Bobby G. Davis National Guard Armory."

Levi enlisted in the Army as a private in 1952, attending basic and advanced training at Fort Sill, Okla. Three years later, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Tennessee Army National Guard, going on to hold command and staff positions at the battery, battalion and brigade levels. He served as inspector general and S-1 adjutant at the Guard's state headquarters in Nashville.

Levi also served as commander of the 196th Field Artillery Brigade from 1982 until his retirement in 1987. During those years, he did a lot to update the Chattanooga armory: improved parking, roof repairs and extensive remodeling of the drill hall, including a concrete floor, new windows and doors, a latrine for women and a heating system.

"My success in the National Guard was all the people surrounding me," Levi said. "There are so many who ought to share in this honor."

State Sen. Todd Gardenhire, R-Chattanooga, introduced the bill last February. "Carl's done a lot for that armory over the years," he said. "It's been his life. He's a great guy, and every veteran I know looks up to him."

A graduate of the University of Chattanooga, Levi served as the city's treasurer for 24 years, retiring in 2001. He was commander of Summers-Whitehead American Legion Post 14 for 25 years, and currently serves as vice chairman of the Legion's National Finance Commission.

As a member of Post 14, Levi was a close friend of Medal of Honor recipients Charles Coolidge and Desmond Doss. He delivered the eulogy at Doss' funeral in 2006.

— Matt Grills

MEMBERSHIP

NEW POSTS

Post 303, Molesworth, England

Chartered Oct. 16 (21 members)

ISCI Post 202, Kuna, Idaho Chartered

Oct. 4 (12 members)

Capstone Post 1831, University of

Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Ala. Chartered

Sept. 19 (15 members)

Capital Post 310, Stockbridge, Ga.

Chartered Sept. 19 (10 members)

Post 2019, Cornfields, Ariz. Chartered

Sept. 12 (15 members)

EDUCATION

Scholarship to help complete nursing degree



Q: *I was discharged from the Army more than 15 years ago and have exhausted my Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.*

Unfortunately, I was not able to use my benefits until recently

because my father had Alzheimer's and needed my assistance. During my time in school, I completed 85 credit hours toward my bachelor's degree in nursing. Is it possible for VA to extend 36 months of benefits so I can complete my degree?

A: If your degree requires completion of 120 hours, you may qualify for the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Scholarship. The scholarship may allow you an additional nine months of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, to a maximum of \$30,000. Apply at va.gov/education/how-to-apply. When you receive your approval letter, take the letter to your school so it can certify your Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Apache Junction, Ariz. askvalerie@legion.org

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Bob Terrell, adjutant of Grant Hodge American Legion Post 17, shows photographs of the four Legionnaires killed in the 1919 Centralia massacre: from left to right, Warren Grimm, Dale Hubbard, Arthur McElfresh and Ben Casagrande. Photo by Scott Spiker

HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

The Centralia tragedy, remembered

Gunshots that killed four members of The American Legion a century ago still echo in the memories of Centralia, Wash. But people who gathered to mark Veterans Day 2019 near a monument to the fallen Legionnaires are determined not to allow that event to define their community.

"One hundred years ago today, on what was then called Armistice Day, there was bloodshed in these streets as conflict erupted between members of the Industrial Workers of the World and The American Legion," said William Anholt, commander of Grant Hodge American Legion Post 17, as he opened the ceremony in Centralia's town center. "Historians will debate the causes of this conflict and assign blame, but that is not why we are here today. Today, we honor all veterans of the armed services."

Keynote speaker and Vietnam War Army veteran Ron Averill laid out the history of Veterans Day and noted its special significance for Centralia, where one of the state's first Legion posts was chartered in March 1919. He also touched on the events that permanently marred the community's first Armistice Day celebration.

As the last of the parade participants drew close to the IWW Hall in downtown Centralia on Nov. 11, 1919, a group of unarmed Legionnaires broke ranks and rushed the Wobbly office. Gunfire erupted. Legionnaires Warren Grimm, Ben Casagrande and Arthur McElfresh were killed. Another,



Peter Lahmann, president of the Lewis County Historical Society, displays an original newspaper reporting violence at Centralia's first Armistice Day parade. Photo by Scott Spiker

Dale Hubbard, was fatally shot a short while later as he pursued Wesley Everest, a member of the IWW. Everest, who also was a veteran, was lynched that evening by vigilantes who have never been identified. A woodsman named John Haney was shot a few days later by one of the groups hunting for IWW members who escaped. His death was called an accident and no one was charged.

Eight Wobblies, who argued they were acting in self-defense, were convicted of

second-degree murder in connection with the parade shootings. Peter Lahmann, president of the Lewis County Historical Society and a lifelong Centralia resident, says the tragedy still haunts his hometown. "It's left a cloud over the community for 100 years," Lahmann says. "The families of the Legionnaires were devastated. The wives and children of the IWW who were jailed were devastated."

Louis Stoffer, a member of Post 17 since 1945, encountered similar silence. "I knew a lot of the guys who were involved in it," says Stoffer, who flew 35 missions as a B-17 flight engineer in World War II. "They sure didn't want to talk about it. It was a blot on Centralia."

In the end, however, Lahmann doesn't fault the Legion for the incident. "The Legionnaires involved were pawns of the big business community who thought, 'We've got to run these dirty unions out of town,'" he says.

— Ken Olsen

ACTIVE DUTY

Shrinking the MRE

A typical squad deployed on a seven-day mission requires more than 30 pounds of food per soldier. "To help troops stay fed without breaking their backs, the scientists, developers and soldiers at the Combat Feeding Directorate with the Combat Capabilities Development Command Soldier Center are closing in on a goal to cut down a seven-day load of MREs from 32 to 10 pounds," *Army Times* reports.

New technologies and processes are giving food scientists tools "to make food retain its nutrition and flavor while continuing to shrink in both weight and volume." One such process is known as "vacuum microwave drying," which "uniformly removes water with both vacuum and microwave techniques, similar to freeze-drying without the cold," and then compresses the food.

Another process is called "sonic agglomeration technology," which uses vibration to "instantly compress food without fillers or binders, reducing the same meal by 50 to 70 percent of its original size with the same ingredients and nutrition."

Army recommendations call for soldiers to eat 0.7 grams of protein a day for every pound of body weight and take in up to 200 mg of caffeine, redosing every three to four hours. In addition, during field ops, "they should snack each hour, if possible, and drink one half to one quart of fluid each hour. After the operation, troops should have a combination of 80 to 120g of carbohydrates and 15 to 25g of protein after heavy activity, and hydrate to relieve thirst."



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Clarence Smoyer proudly wears the Bronze Star with "V" for valor as he stands with New York Times best-selling author Adam Makos, whose book "Spearhead" tells Smoyer's story. Photo by Army Sgt. Maryam Treece



HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

'Hero of Cologne' receives Bronze Star

Nearly 75 years after he destroyed a German Panther tank, World War II Army gunner Cpl. Clarence Smoyer has been awarded the Bronze Star with "V" device for his bravery in the Battle of Cologne.

The ceremony, conducted Sept. 18 at the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., was a surprise for Smoyer, a member of Shoemaker-Haydt Post 314 in Lehigh, Pa. The event was arranged by Sen. Pat Toomey, R-Pa., and author Adam Makos, whose book "Spearhead" details the actions of Smoyer and his tank – dubbed "Eagle" – during the Battle of Cologne. Makos brought Smoyer to Washington under the pretense of a book signing at the Pentagon.

"(The Bronze Star) is well overdue, and he should have received it a long time ago," said Sgt. Joe Caserta, a tankerman who served with Smoyer. The men remain close friends.

"In my travels across Pennsylvania and across this great country, we hear stories of these heroes who all too often are forgotten," Toomey said. "These stories, and specifically Clarence's ... are a reminder of why Congress and all Americans owe a huge debt of gratitude to those very men and women."

On March 6, 1945, Smoyer heard the words of Lt. Bill Stillman over the radio: "Gentlemen, I give you Cologne. Let's knock the hell out of them." The tank crew obliged.



"Spearhead" by Gareth Hector, courtesy ValorStudios.com

The Eagle's crew rode into the German city, one of the Third Reich's last strongholds. It had mostly been evacuated, but German forces guarded the Cologne Cathedral. A German Panther tank crew destroyed two U.S. tanks, killing several soldiers. The Eagle's crew moved forward, and Smoyer fired three shots in quick succession. The Panther went up in flames.

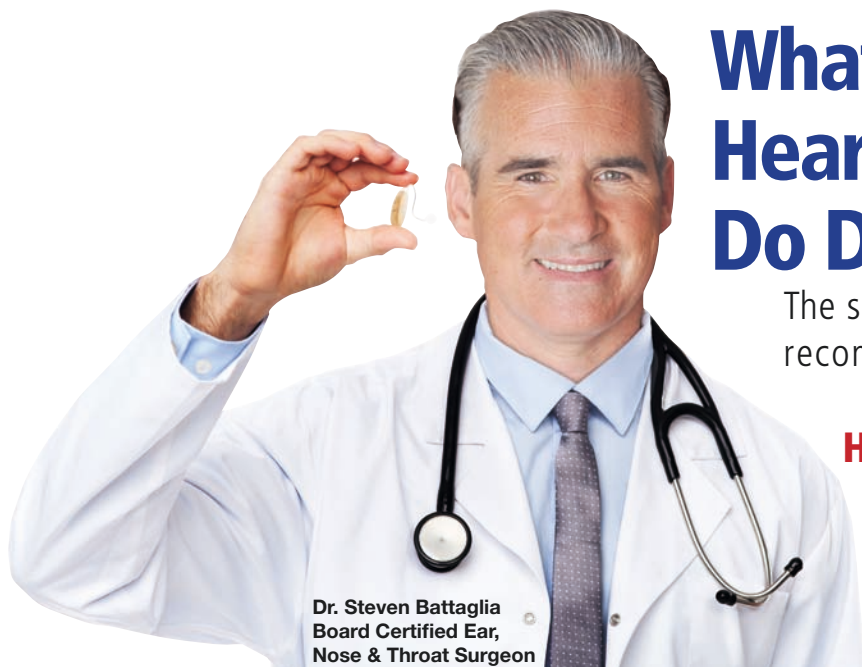
"Clarence sat back from the periscope, still stunned by the previous 40 or 50 seconds of furious action. Did that really happen?" Makos wrote. "After some time, Clarence broke the silence in the tank. 'That was close,' he said."

Footage from the battle earned Smoyer the nickname "hero of Cologne." He was supposed to be awarded the medal in 1945, but in the days following the battle, Smoyer was approached by German children asking for bubble gum. "I pulled my pockets out to show them they were empty," Smoyer said. "MPs pulled up beside me: 'You're not supposed to be talking to the Germans.'" Smoyer was cited for fraternizing with the enemy and his award withdrawn. Toomey and Makos persuaded the Army to review the case.

Two words escaped Smoyer's lips as he climbed out of his vehicle and walked toward the ceremony: "Bronze Star."

"I wear this in memory of all the young people who have lost their lives in battle," he said.

– Mackenzie Wolf



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M1A2 Abrams tanks from the 1st Infantry Division move out as part of an exercise at Johanna Range, Poland, on May 20. Army leaders in Europe plan to send 20,000 U.S.-based soldiers to the continent this spring to conduct Defender-Europe 20, one of the largest military exercises since the Cold War. Army photo by Sgt. Thomas Mort

DEFENSE

U.S., NATO allies prepare for large-scale exercise

Exercise Defender-Europe 20, to be held in April and May, will see the largest U.S. troop deployment from the United States to Europe in 25 years, *Jane's Defence* reports.

The exercise will involve 19 nations, and will stretch from Central Europe to Eastern Europe and all the way to the former Soviet republic of Georgia. "The exercise will involve approximately 37,000 troops from the United States, NATO members, and partner country Finland, including some 20,000 troops deploying from the U.S.," *Jane's Defence* details, citing documents from U.S. Army-Europe. "Some 9,000 U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine troops based in Europe and 8,000 European servicemembers will participate."

Defense News adds, "The division-scaled exercise will test the Army's ability to deliver a force from 'fort in the United States to port in the United States,' and then to ports in Europe, and from there to operational areas throughout Europe."

The exercise will involve three parachute assaults, large-unit water crossings, the use of Army prepositioned materiel, and full live-fire war games. Defender-Europe 20 is "a very big deal," as Lt. Gen. Chris Cavoli, commander of U.S. Army-Europe, told Defense News.

ACTIVE DUTY

The military's insomnia epidemic

A massive, 14-year study by the Sleep Research Society that examined the occurrence of insomnia following combat exposure in 1.3 million military personnel has found that in the eight years following the 2003 invasion of Iraq, "the rate of insomnia ... skyrocketed 652 percent among military personnel," *Military Times* reports.

The epidemic of sleeplessness is no trivial matter for the Pentagon. Given that insomnia increases the risk of cardiovascular issues, diabetes, stroke, depression and anxiety, the military is partnering with industry and academia to develop therapeutic treatment methods "designed to steer clear of medication."

One of the more promising treatments features a smartphone app that allows patients "to actively engage with their clinicians anytime, anywhere," *Military Times* reports.

"Patients using the app essentially have a sleep coach in their pocket, and the providers using the app can monitor, almost in real time, sleep health and behaviors that effect sleep quality," according to Anne Germain, a doctor who has worked with the military for almost two decades on insomnia and PTSD issues. Her firm, Noctem, partnered with researchers from the University of Pittsburgh to develop the sleep-assessment app.

MONEY

World's most valuable sports franchises

1. Dallas Cowboys (NFL), **\$5 billion**
2. New York Yankees (MLB), **\$4.6 billion**
3. Real Madrid (soccer), **\$4.24 billion**
4. Barcelona (soccer), **\$4.02 billion**
5. New York Knicks (NBA), **\$4 billion**

Source: Forbes.com

VERBATIM

The mission is to raise awareness – to get people talking about how they can be part of the solution and not just the problem.

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, launching her anti-meth campaign, which features an outline of the state and the tagline "Meth. We're On It." Through TV ads, billboards and posters, the campaign emphasizes that meth is an issue that affects everyone. *Source: Argus Leader*

Photo courtesy South Dakota Department of Social Services



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PERSONAL FINANCE



Money moves for the new year

FOCUS ON FINANCES



J.J. MONTANARO

A new year, a new you. That's the plan, right? Easier said than done. This year, I'm offering 20 resolution ideas that alone typically wouldn't make your New Year's list. However, they're all fairly simple, and the momentum created by knocking out a few could pay big dividends as you work to strengthen your personal finances.

■ Set up an appointment with your

attorney. It's probably been too long (or never) since you reviewed and updated your wills, powers of attorney and the rest of your plan. Make the call.

■ **Review your investment portfolio.** Unless something changes between now and when you're reading this, we've been on a 10+ year run. Is your investment portfolio still in sync, or is it time to rebalance or reallocate?

■ **Cut what you pay for utilities.** I haven't cut the cable yet, but one call threatening to do so saved me about \$50 per month. See if there's an opportunity to save on your cellphone, cable or other recurring bills so you can redeploy that money elsewhere.

■ **Review auto drafts.** Sit down with your partner (and children?), credit card and bank statements in hand, and validate all the automatic drafts and charges.

■ **Consolidate retirement accounts.** Gathering far-flung IRAs and retirement plans from former employers to get a better view of what you have and where you stand.

■ **Take a retirement snapshot.** What's your number? Are you on track? Talk to your financial planner or use an online calculator to see where you stand, and make necessary adjustments (save more/spend less).

■ **Review your goals.** A new year provides an opportunity to recommit to your short-, medium- and long-term goals. If you don't have them, now's your chance.

■ **Set up savings account No. 1: emergency fund.** Life happens; be prepared.

■ **Set up savings account No. 2: house fund.** Having cash on hand for house repairs, upgrades or catastrophes is critical.

■ **Set up savings account No. 3: vacation fund.** We need more vacation ... without racking up debt. Start saving today for your next getaway.

■ **Set up savings account No. 4: gift fund.** If you are suffering a debt hangover from the holiday season, start stashing money now so you'll be a cash buyer next year.

■ **Implement a spending cap.** This can keep you and your partner on the same page. Agree that any spending greater than \$100, \$200 or whatever number is appropriate requires consultation.

■ **Check out Social Security.** If you haven't already, set up a My Social Security account at ssa.gov to keep track of your benefits.

■ **Boost your retirement plan contribution.** This is easy if you're receiving a pay raise, but bumping it up a percentage point or two can make a big difference down the road.

■ **Take advantage of catch-up contributions.** The IRS allows those 50 and older to contribute an extra \$1,000 (IRAs) or \$6,000 (employer plans). Use the catch-up to catch up.

■ **Become a cash buyer for a week.** Put the plastic away for a week and use cash only. This can be eye-opening.

■ **Get rid of dead weight.** Comb through your closets, garage and storage, and jettison the stuff you're not using. This could mean extra income, a charitable deduction and less clutter.

■ **Check insurance rates.** Often insurance becomes a set-and-forget, or more appropriately pay-and-forget, proposition. Get some quotes and determine if you're paying too much.

■ **Review insurance.** Do you have coverage you no longer need, the right amount of coverage or gaps? A quick call to your insurance providers could reveal savings or gaps.

■ **Money talk.** Discuss your overall financial plan with your partner. Too often, one or the other has all the knowledge – and a shorter life expectancy.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.

legion.org/usaa/focusonfinances

TECHNOLOGY

Big data getting bigger

2.5 quintillion bytes Amount of data created per day

3.5 billion Searches Google processes daily

456,000 Tweets sent on Twitter per minute

95 million Photos and videos shared on Instagram per day

45,788 Uber trips per minute

3.7 billion People who use the Internet

16 million Text messages sent per minute

5 New Facebook profiles created per second

Sources: Bernard Marr, Forbes, Data Never Sleeps 5.0

**IF YOU HAVE AN ASBESTOS PERSONAL INJURY CLAIM AGAINST
KAISER GYPSUM COMPANY, INC. OR KAISER CEMENT CORPORATION**

PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE OF VOTING RIGHTS AND RIGHT TO OBJECT.

Kaiser Gypsum Company, Inc. and Kaiser Cement Corporation (now known as Hanson Permanente Cement, Inc.) (together, the "Debtors") made certain products that contained asbestos. These products included various exterior stucco materials, joint compounds for wallboard and radiant heating components, texturizing paint and other related products (the "Products"). A full list of the Products can be found at <https://cases.primeclerk.com/kaisergypsum>. People using these Products (and family members and others who came into contact with these people) may have been exposed to asbestos. The Debtors are now in bankruptcy and people with claims of injury caused by exposure to asbestos in the Products have certain rights that may be affected by the bankruptcy filing.

The Debtors have filed a Joint Plan of Reorganization (the "Plan") and a Disclosure Statement, a document that provides important information about the Plan. The Disclosure Statement has been approved and will be sent to individuals with asbestos-related personal injury claims so that they can vote whether to accept or reject the Plan. A hearing to consider confirmation of the Plan (the "Confirmation Hearing") has been scheduled for March 30, 2020 to April 4, 2020 in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of North Carolina, 401 W. Trade St., Charlotte, NC 28202. Information on the Confirmation Hearing and all Plan-related documents is available at <https://cases.primeclerk.com/kaisergypsum>.

Am I Affected by the Plan?

If you claim to have been injured by asbestos in any of the Products, you are entitled to vote to approve or reject the Plan. The full Disclosure Statement and a ballot were sent to all lawyers representing individuals with current asbestos-related personal injury claims against the Debtors or directly to those individuals. A vote to accept or reject the Plan must be received by **5:00 p.m., prevailing Eastern Time, on February 20, 2020**. If you believe you have an asbestos-related personal injury claim against the Debtors and have questions, then you should contact your lawyer immediately.

What does the Plan do?

The Plan is the result of a settlement between the Debtors and court-appointed representatives of current and future asbestos claimants. The Plan preserves the Debtors' asbestos insurance coverage and permits asbestos personal injury claimants to pursue insurance recoveries in the tort system. The Plan also proposes to create a trust to pay asbestos-related personal injury claims to the extent the claims are not covered by insurance. If the Plan is approved, money can only be received from insurance and the trust; asbestos personal injury claimants will not be able to recover money from the Debtors or other protected parties listed in the Plan. If you have a pending lawsuit against the Debtors, you should talk to your lawyer about how the Plan may affect you.

How to Obtain Documents.

Copies of the Disclosure Statement, which includes the Plan, the voting materials and the notice of the Confirmation Hearing may be obtained by visiting this website: <https://cases.primeclerk.com/kaisergypsum>. You may also obtain copies of these documents by sending a request, in writing, to Prime Clerk, LLC, Kaiser Gypsum Company, Inc. Ballot Processing, c/o Prime Clerk, One Grand Central Place, 60 East 42nd Street, Suite 1440, New York, New York 10165 or by calling (855) 855-7644.

What if I want to Object to the Plan?

If you have a lawyer, you should talk to him or her about any concerns you may have about the Plan. You may object to the Plan if you do not like all or part of it. The deadline for filing and serving objections to the confirmation of the Plan is **5:00 p.m., prevailing Eastern Time, on February 20, 2020**. All objections must comply with the requirements set forth in paragraph 12 of the notice of the Confirmation Hearing, which is posted on the website below.

For more information, visit the website or call the toll-free number below.

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LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Post 82, GA: Dorsey B. Cochran, Ted D. Hall, Roy E. Hughes

IN SEARCH OF

22nd Bomb Wing FMS Sqdn (March AFB, Riverside, CA, 1965-1968), Rex Malott, (765) 603-6920, malott57@att.net

101st Abn 1st Bde 1st Bn 327th Inf Echo Co "Tiger Force" (Jan 1968-June 1970), Billy Stewart, (843) 812-7819

1607th Comm & Electronics Sqdn (All Shops, Dover AFB, 1961-1964), Joel Gray, 1607thcomm.elect@gmail.com

4123rd Civil Eng Sqdn (Clinton-Sherman AFB,

OK, Feb 1960-Sept 1963), George Groudias, (631) 581-4220, georgegroudias@yahoo.com
C Co 35th Inf Rgt 25th Inf Div (June 1950-Aug 1951), Charles Scott, (304) 763-3795, ccjmscott@gmail.com

Co 31 (NTC Bainbridge, MD, Apr 1957), Ron Sanford, (863) 243-8644

G Co 86th Inf Rgt 10th Inf Div (Schweinfurt, Germany, 1955-1956), Lou Bortolin, (575) 544-2473

HQ Co 27th Cbt Eng Bn 937th Eng Grp (Fort Campbell, KY & Vietnam, 1964-1966), Raymond Dickens, (615) 924-3403, dickensray@gmail.com

TAPS

James G. Brouillette, Dept. of Vermont. Nat'l Vice Cmdr. 1991-1992, Dept. Cmdr. 1986-1987, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1987-1989, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1985-1986, Nat'l Americanism Cmsn. Memb. 1992-2015, Nat'l Citizens Flag Alliance Dept. Chmn. 1997-2001, Nat'l Education Cmte. Americanism Cmsn. Rep.

1995-2013, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1989-1991, Nat'l Legis. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1990-1991, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmsn. Region 1 Memb. 1986-1987, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1989-1990, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmsn. Region 1 Vice Chmn. 1987-1988 and Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmsn. Region 1 Chmn. 1988-1989.

Robert L. Hughes Jr., Dept. of South Carolina. Dept. Cmdr. 1981-1982 and Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1983-1986.

Mary O'Coin, Dept. of New York. Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2006-2013 and Nat'l Media & Communications Cncl. Memb. 2013-2016.

Vernon A. Useldinger, Dept. of North Carolina. Past Dept. Cmdr. 1981, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 2003-2004, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1965-1966, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1988-1996, Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Consultant 1966-1967, Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Advisory Board Memb. 1972-1977 and Nat'l Sec. Cmsn. Memb. 2003-2006.

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As I said before, I never repeat myself.

A SPIDER asked the man who had trapped it in his bathroom, “Why are you terrified of me?”

“Well,” the man replied, “the reasons I had have all been replaced by the fact that you can talk.”

A BANK ROBBER pulls out a gun, points it at the teller and says, “Give me all the money or you’re geography!”

The puzzled teller replies, “You mean history?”

“Don’t change the subject!”

MY WIFE gets mad because I never shave on weekends. She says if I’m away and she gets lonely, she kisses a Brillo pad.

DON’T THINK OF ME as the boss. Think of me as a navigator on the sea of confusion.

A BANK is a place that will lend you money if you can prove that you don’t need it.

THIS IS THE STORY of four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it.

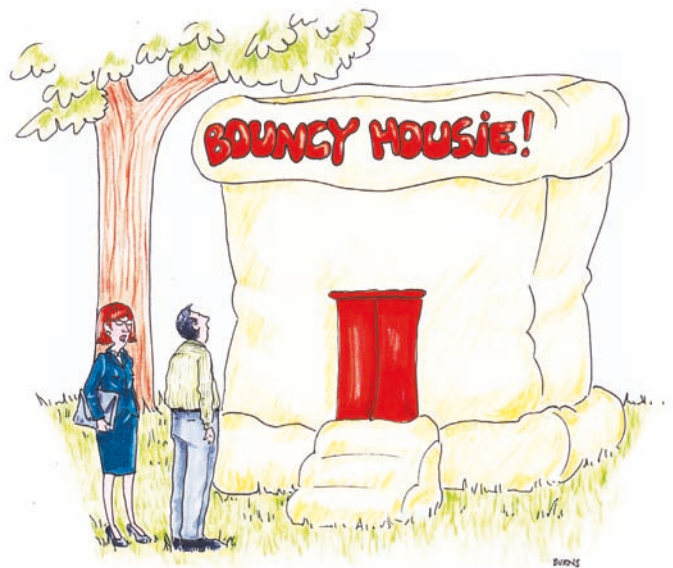
Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody’s job.

Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn’t do it.

Consequently, it wound up that Nobody told Anybody, so Everybody blamed Somebody.



*“You’ve got tough questions, and you want answers.
Or do you really want ... candy?”*



“It’s in your price range, and it’s fun.”



“From now on it’s, ‘Polly wants a low-sodium, low-carb cracker.’”

A MAN was watching TV and enjoying a beer.

“Don’t go,” he yelled at the screen. “Do not enter that building. Walk away. Argh, you stupid man!”

His wife called from the kitchen, “What on earth are you watching?”

“Our wedding video!”

A GUY IN A TAXI wanted to speak to the driver, so he leaned forward and tapped him on the shoulder. The driver screamed and yanked the wheel, jumping the curb and hitting a lamppost.

The startled passenger said, “I didn’t mean to frighten you. I just wanted to ask you something.”

The taxi driver replied, “It’s not your fault, sir. It’s my first day as a cab driver. I’ve been driving a hearse for 25 years.”

“I HATE HOW every ‘Mission Impossible’ film ends with the same stupid twist where the mission turns out to be possible.” – *James Etchison*

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To me, it’s the best sleep chair I’ve ever had.”**

— J. Fitzgerald, VA



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